GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6562
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2005
POACHING OF WILDLIFE IN MADHYA PRADESH
Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that poaching of wildlife is rampant in Bandhavgarh National Park of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether the Chairman of Committee set up by Hon'ble Supreme Court on maintenance of Magdi, Katwa and Khatauli ranges has made certain remarks in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Tiger Trust has approached the court with serious complaints of illegal activities in the park;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the recommendations made thereon by the Committee; and

(f) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) While instances of sporadic poaching of wild animals, in and around Bandhavgarh National Park of Madhya Pradesh, have come to light, there is no report of rampant poaching in the area. The details of poaching cases in the National Park from April, 2004 to December, 2004 as received from state, are at Annexure-1.

(b), (c), (d) & (e) The Central Empowered Committee constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India visited Bandhavgarh National Park in February, 2005 in connection with IA(s) 543 & 593, filed by one Shri Manjit Singh Ahluwalia and an Non-Governmental Organization – 'Tiger Trust'. The remarks made by the Chairman regarding Magdhi and Khatauli ranges are at Annexure-2.

(f) Khatauli and Magdhi ranges of Bandhavgarh are not finally notified as a National Park and settlements are present inside. The Government of India has issued directives to the State time and again for ensuring protection to the habitat and wild animals in the reserve within the ambit of Project Tiger Guidelines and the Wildlife (Protection) Act,1972.

ANNEXURE-1

DETAILS OF POACHING CASES (BANDHAVGARH NATIONAL PARK)

Sl.No.	Range	Case No.	Date	Animal species
1.	Tala	1404/24	05-05-2004	Langur
2.	Tala	1542/14	27-12-2004	Barking deer
3.	Magdhi	1964/23	05-08-2004	Mongoose
4.	Khatauli	1975/20	10-10-2004	Rabbit
5.	Khatauli	3936/25	02-11-2004	Spotted deer
6.	Panpatha	1530/20	12-07-2004	Chinkara

ANNEXURE-2

REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL EMPOWERED COMMITTEE

(a) Magdi − It was quite clear that this range was degraded and in appalling condition. While driving around it was observed that grass cutting was going on right in front of the forest chowkidar. Large areas were full of cow dung and the under growth was very thin. Immediate corrective measures are required in this range. There is a huge difference between Magdi and Tala range.

(b) Khatauli − Though Khatauli was slightly better than Magdi still the same thinning of forest and degradation was visible. Also on our site inspection we found a road being constructed 36 feet in width from one end to the other and the water drains on both sides revealed signs of bamboos and trees being cut. A Rs.3 lakh sanction was being used to create this road in the middle of nowhere and going nowhere. At least 80 bamboo clumps had been affected. The Director did not know of the road work and ordered it stopped. (Damdama-Tirka Munari road in National Park for 1550 metres). Such management decisions should never be taken.

It was clear that there has to be an intensive focus on all the seriously neglected other Ranges − Magdi, Khatauli and Katwa. Without this focus the future of Bandhavgarh National Park will be a question mark.

SPECIAL POINT

There must be an immediate focus on village resettlement in these above Range Forest Divisions − Little effort has been made in this area.

CONCLUSION

Bandhavgarh is in an extremely fragile and vulnerable state today. Though tigers are doing well in Tala the tourism range, the rest of the ranges are totally neglected and in a mess. Immediate refocusing on priority areas outside tourism is urgent to secure the safety of the Park and the future of its tigers.